

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04843 01 OF 02 211430Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAA-01 SES-02 NEAE-00 SSO-00
NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 TRSE-00
OMB-01 ACDA-12 HA-05 /094 W
-----065533 211441Z /43

O P 211357Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9326
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4843

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION, AUGUST 21, 1978, 1600 HOURS
LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4812 (DTG 191015Z AUG 78)

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELI JETS HIT BURJ AL BARAJINAH AND DAMOUR.
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 04843 01 OF 02 211430Z

THE EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE IS STILL GENERALLY HOLDING,
BUT A KEY INDICATOR OF FURTHER PROGRESS--THE REOPENING OF
THE PORT--REMAINS UNCLEAR. AMIN GEMAYEL MADE
AN USUALLY CONCILIATORY STATEMENT ABOUT THE SYRIAN PRESENCE
HERE. U.N. UNDER-SECRETARY BRIAN UQUHART VISITED LEBANON
ON AUGUST 19-20. FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH MET
WITH PRESIDENT ASSAD IN LATAKIA. PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS SAID

LEBANON FELT "LET DOWN" BY THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE OF SOUTH LEBANON.

2. ISRAELI PLANES HIT PALESTINIANS.

A. THE MORNING OF AUGUST 21 ISRAELI JETS HIT PALESTINIANS AT BURJ AL BARAJINAH ON THE EDGE OF BEIRUT (WHERE THE PFLP HAS A HEAVY PRESENCE), AND IN DAMOUR ABOUT 10 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF BEIRUT. THE ATTACKS WERE IN RETALIATION FOR A PALESTINIAN ATTACK ON AN EL AL SHUTTLE BUS IN LONDON ON AUGUST 20. ACCORDING TO RADIO BEIRUT, TWO ISRAELI PLANES WERE INVOLVED.

B. PALESTINIAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS FIRED ON THE AIRCRAFT. A PLO COMMUNIQUE SAID, "THREE STRUGGLERS FELL AND 14 WERE WOUNDED" AT BURJ AL BARAJINAH, WHILE THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES IN DAMOUR WHERE A SCHOOL WAS STRUCK.

3. EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE.

THE EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE IS STILL GENERALLY HOLDING, BUT A KEY INDICATOR OF FURTHER PROGRESS--THE STATUS OF BEIRUT PORT-- REMAINS UNCLEAR.

4. PORT AJAR.

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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 04843 01 OF 02 211430Z

THE PORT OPENED MORNING OF AUGUST 21--SORT OF (SEPTEL). TWO RPG ROUNDS HIT THE PORT AT ABOUT 0800 HOURS ON AUGUST 21 AND TWO OR THREE MORE ABOUT 1430 HOURS. NEVERTHELESS, SOME WORKERS SHOWED UP, AND ONE SHIP ENTERED THE PORT ON AUGUST 19, ACCORDING TO A CUSTOMS OFFICIAL.

5. AMIN GEMAYEL CALLS FOR ENTENTE.

DEPUTY AMIN GEMAYEL IN AN INTERVIEW CARRIED BY AN NAHAR ON AUGUST 21 SAID THAT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AMONG THE LEBANESE "IS THE KEY TO SOLVING ALL THEIR PROBLEMS." IN UNUSUALLY CONCILIATORY TERMS FOR A PHALANGE OFFICIAL, HE ADDED THAT HIS PARTY WOULD EXTEND A "HAND FOR COOPERATION" WITH THE SYRIANS IN THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE, IF A NEW FRAMEWORK WERE DRAWN UP DEFINING THE STATUS AND ROLE OF THIS FORCE ON LEBANESE TERRITORY.

6. URQUHART VISIT.

U.N. UNDERSECRETARY GENERAL BRIAN URQUHART LEFT FOR ISRAEL ON AUGUST 20 AFTER A TWO-DAY VISIT TO LEBANON. WHILE HERE HE MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS, FOREIGN MINISTER

BOUTROS, ARMY COMMANDER KHOURY, UNIFIL COMMANDER ERSKINE AND OTHERS. ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR AND AS SAFIR, URQUHART INDICATED THAT THE U.N. DID NOT HAVE A "MAGIC WANT" TO SOLVE THE IMPASSE IN THE BORDER REGION BETWEEN LEBANON AND ISRAEL. THE PAPERS ALSO REPORTED THAT THE LEBANESE TOLD URQUHART THAT:

-- THE GOL REJECTED A U.N. PROPOSAL THAT THE BATTALION AT KAWKABA BE AIRLIFTED TO TIBNIN BY

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04843 02 OF 02 211435Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 4843

HELICOPTER, BECAUSE THE GOL DID NOT WANT THE LEBANESE TROOPS TO "SNEAK" INTO THE TOWN.

--ISRAEL WAS TO BLAME FOR THE IMPASSE IN THE SOUTH;

--THE GOL WOULD NOT BACK DOWN ON ITS DECISION
TO SEND REGULAR TROOPS TO SOUTH LEBANON;
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 04843 02 OF 02 211435Z

--THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAD TO EXPLAIN TO THE
SECURITY COUNCIL THE NEED FOR LEBANON TO REGAIN
CONTROL OVER ALL ITS TERRITORY;

--LEBANON WOULD NEVERTHELESS NOT ASK FOR A
SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING.

7. FRANJIYAH RETURNS FROM DAMASCUS.

A. FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH RETURNED
AUGUST 19 TO IHIDIN AFTER THREE DAYS OF TALKS IN LATAKIA
WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFIZ AL ASSAD. FRANJIYAH
BEFORE LEAVING LATAKIA TOLD REPORTERS THAT
SYRIA REMAINED THE ONLY HOPE FOR LEBANON.

B. AN NAHAR ON AUGUST 20 SAID THAT FRANJIYAH
HAD URGED PRESIDENT ASSAD TO GET SYRIAN TROOPS HERE
TO ABSTAIN FROM INDISCRIMINATE SHELLING OF CHRISTIAN AREAS
BECAUSE SUCH SHELLING WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON CHRIS-
TIAN PUBLIC OPINION. FRANJIYAH REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT THE
ADF SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM SOME POSITIONS AFTER THEIR MANDATE
WAS RENEWED IN SEPTEMBER. THE SYRIANS REPLIED
THAT IF THEY WITHDREW FROM SOME AREAS, THEY WOULD
WEAKEN THE AUTHORITY OF PRESIDENT SARKIS AND STRENGTHEN
THE POSITION OF THE MILITIAS, THE NEWSPAPER SAID.

8. HOSS CRITICIZES THE UNITED STATES.

IN AN INTERVIEW CARRIED BY THE AUGUST 21 EDITION
OF THE BEIRUT WEEKLY MONDAY MORNING, PRIME MINISTER
AL HOSS SAID THAT LEBANON FELT "LET DOWN" BY THE
UNITED STATES, BECAUSE "THE UNITED STATES WAS ONE OF
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 04843 02 OF 02 211435Z

THE COUNTRIES WHICH ENCOURAGED US TO DISPATCH AN
ARMY UNIT TO THE SOUTH." HOSS CLAIMED THAT, "HE WAS
ASSURED OF U.S. INTERVENTION WHENEVER NECESSARY TO
OVERCOME ANY HINDRANCE THAT MIGHT ARISE FROM THE SIDE
OF ISRAEL."

DECONTROL OCTOBER 21, 1978.

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Message Attributes

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